

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The claims have been amended by rewriting Claims 1, 5, 8, 15, 17 and 21 and canceling Claims 4, 11-12, 16 and 22. Claims 1-3, 5-10, 13-15 and 17-21 remain in the application. Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and these remarks/arguments.

Allowable Subject Matter:

Applicants acknowledge that the Examiner has allowed Claims 8-10, 13 and 14 over the prior art of record. Applicants have, however, amended Claim 8 to correct a typographical error.

The Examiner has objected to Claims 3-5, 16 and 20-22 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but states that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, including all other limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicants have therefore cancelled Claim 4 and amended Claim 1 to include the limitations of objected to Claim 4, thereby now rendering Claim 1 in a condition for allowance. Claim 3 is likewise now in a condition for allowance as it depends from an allowable base claim (i.e., amended Claim 1). Claim 5 is also now in a condition for allowance as Applicants have amended Claim 5 to depend from an allowable base claim (i.e., amended Claim 1).

Applicants have further cancelled Claim 16 and amended Claim 15 to include the limitations of objected to Claim 16, thereby now rendering Claim 15 in a condition for allowance.

Finally, Applicants have cancelled Claim 22 and amended Claim 17 to include the limitations of objected to Claim 22, thereby now rendering Claim 17 in a condition for allowance. Claim 20 is now likewise in a condition for allowance as it depends from an allowable base claim (i.e., Claim 17) and intervening claim. Claim 21 is also now in a condition for allowance as Applicants have rewritten Claim 21 in independent form including all limitations of the original Claim 1.

Claim Rejections

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1 and 2 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Toh (USPN 5,987,011) in view of Baran (USPN 5,115,433). As stated above, Applicants have amended Claim 1 to include the limitations of objected to Claim 4 to render Claim 1 in a condition for allowance, and Claim 2 which depends from Claim 1 is therefore now

in a condition for allowance for all of the same reasons. Applicants, thereby, request that the Examiner accordingly withdraw the rejections to Claims 1 and 2.

The Examiner has rejected Claims 6 and 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Toh and Baran, further in view of Shimojo (USPN 6,643,256 B1). Applicants submit that Claims 6 and 7 are now in a condition for allowance as they now depend from an allowable base claim (i.e., amended Claim 1). Applicants, thereby, request that the Examiner accordingly withdraw the rejections to Claims 6 and 7.

The Examiner has rejected Claim 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being clearly anticipated by Shimojo (USPN 6,643,256 B1). Applicants have cancelled Claim 11, thereby rendering moot the Examiner's rejection of this claim.

The Examiner has rejected Claim 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shimojo in view of Toh, and further in view of Baran. Applicants have cancelled Claim 12, thereby rendering moot the Examiner's rejection of this claim.

The Examiner has rejected Claim 15 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being clearly anticipated by Toh (USPN 5,987,011). As stated above, Applicants have amended Claim 15 to include the limitations of objected to Claim 16 to render Claim 15 in a condition for allowance. Applicants, thereby, request that the Examiner accordingly withdraw the rejections to Claim 15.

The Examiner has rejected Claims 17 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being clearly anticipated by Baran (USPN 5,115,433). As stated above, Applicants have amended Claim 17 to include the limitations of objected to Claim 22 to render Claim 17 in a condition for allowance, and Claim 18 which depends from Claim 17 is therefore now in a condition for allowance for all of the same reasons. Applicants, thereby, request that the Examiner accordingly withdraw the rejections to Claims 17 and 18.

The Examiner has rejected Claim 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Baran in view of Shimojo. Applicants submit that Claim 18 is now in a condition for allowance as it now depends from an allowable base claim and intervening claim (i.e., amended Claim 17 and Claim 18). Applicants, thereby, request that the Examiner accordingly withdraw the rejections to Claim 19.

The Applicants note the art cited, but not relied upon by the Examiner.

No amendment made was related to the statutory requirements of patentability unless expressly stated herein. No amendment made was for the purpose of narrowing the scope of any

claim, unless Applicants has argued herein that such amendment was made to distinguish over a particular reference or combination of references.

The Applicants believe that the subject application, as amended, is in condition for allowance. Such action is earnestly solicited by the Applicants.

In the event that the Examiner deems the present application non-allowable, it is requested that the Examiner telephone the Applicants' attorney or agent at the number indicated below so that the prosecution of the present case may be advanced by the clarification of any continuing rejection.

Accordingly, this application is believed to be in proper form for allowance and an early notice of allowance is respectfully requested.

Please charge any fees associated herewith, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account No. 502117.

Respectfully submitted,

EDWARDS, ET AL.

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